846 stomach of the child and that it would inherit the natural weaknesses of the animals which the father had eaten. For example, if the father ate tortoise the child would be deaf and would have no more brains than this animal and if he ate manatee the child's eyes would resemble those of this animal i.e., small and round. There are many similar examples of the same thing.

Finally, during all of this time they have absolutely no intercourse with their wives. Brutality, weakness, and unbridled lust, typical of the greater part of our Christians, is sufficiently restrained by these barbarians who have neither faith nor religion. In addition, as soon [843] as their wives conceive they have no further intercourse.

304 The women also fast during the time after the birth of their child, but not so rigorously as their husbands. They prepare themselves by this means and take great care to flatten the foreheads of their babies while the bone is still pliable. They push in the nose to make it flat. However, many of them may be found who have aquiline noses which look just like the noses of the French.

852 Eight days after the six month period the father invites one of his 553 most intimate friends to be the godfather of his son, or if the child is a girl, the friend is called a godmother. They have a small banquet and then cut a little hair from the head of the child. They pierce the ear lobe and also the septum of the nose and they pass two or three threads of cotton through the hole to make certain that the wound will not mend itself. Next they pierce the lower lip. If they think that the child is too weak to stand this pain they postpone the piercing and content themselves with cutting its hair. This being done they give the child the name which will be his for life [but] which does not prevent the taking of other names. But that name will be with him always and in recognition of the fact the father and mother of the child anoint the neck and head of the godfather or godmother with oil of palmetto.

854 It is astonishing to see how few Carib children are deformed con- [732] sidering the fact that their mothers never swaddle them; in this respect the Carib women would be able to mock at our French women who pamper their children. When the children have gained strength [853] through their mother's milk they are then given some sweet potatoes or bananas which are first chewed by the mothers and then put into the mouths of their babies.

5: Rouse E-4 (no date) 1948 ST13 Callinago ST13 (1650-1700)

LIFE CYCLE

Birth and childhood.—Sexual intercourse was forbidden during pregnancy. The birth often took place by a fire. If it caused trouble, the woman drank juice made from a certain root. Afterward she washed the child in a stream and placed it in a tiny hammock or on a couch of leaves. If the birth had taken place at night, the men of the house bathed themselves so that the child would not catch cold.

For several days after birth the mother fasted, eating only dried cassava and drinking warm water. The father, on the other hand, practiced the couvade. Immediately after the birth he complained of pains, went to a separate hut, and lay in a hammock. He remained there for at least 40 days after the birth of his first child, and for 4 or 5 days after the birth of other children. During this time he went out only at night and avoided meeting anyone for fear that they might tempt him to break his fast, thereby making the mother sick and the child cowardly. At first he took no food. After 5 days he was permitted to drink corn beer and after 10 days to eat manioc bread in increasing quantities. He ate only the insides of the bread, the crusts being hung up in the hut until the end of the 40-day period, when they served as the basis for a feast in the village carbet. Preceding the feast the father was brought into the carbet, was stood on two large flat cakes of cassava, and was scarified by two men chosen by the carbet chief. A mixture of urucú, pepper seeds, and tobacco juice was rubbed into the cuts, and the blood which fell from them was daubed on the face of the child so that he would have the courage shown by the father in undergoing scarification. The man was then fed the two cassava cakes upon which he had stood and also fish, which he had to spit out. He went back to bed for several days and had to abstain from the flesh of animals for a period of 6 months or a year, lest the child become deformed.[7]

The child received its first name 12 or 15 days after birth from a friend of the father who acted as godfather or godmother. The name was taken from that of an ancestor, from nature, or from something that had happened during birth, pregnancy, or the couvade. If the baby were strong enough to bear it, his ears, nose, and lips were pierced at the same time, but this might be deferred until 2 years had passed, when the child's hair was cut.

At first all children ate with the mother; when 4 or 5 years old the boys began to eat in the men's house. The fathers spent much time in training their sons in hunting, fishing, swimming, singing, basketry, making canoes, and particularly in shooting the bow and arrow, at which they had

[7] The accounts of the couvade vary considerably from source to source. The above version is taken largely from Davies (1666, pp. 236–238), with supplemental data from La Borde (1856, pp. 249–250).

6: Taylor E-5 (1930-1937) 1938
ST13 Callinago ST13

It is not usual for husband and wife to spend the whole night 513
together—each retires to sleep on a separate couch or mat.

Rochefort mentions the fact that the Island Carib of his day never 343
touched a pregnant woman. This is still true, be the woman his own wife or another.

I have heard a married woman protest that she was not normally pregnant, but that a piai had put a tête-chien (dog-headed Dominica constrictor) in her belly. On the other hand, legend reports this snake as having had connections with women in the old days.

Parturition is accomplished in a squatting or sitting posture (in 744
the old days by straddling a hammock split lengthwise down the middle), and with the assistance of some old sage-femme, whose manipulations and remedies are of very doubtful benefit to the patient. After giving birth, the Carib woman remains confined to the house for 40 days; i. e., until her "retour de couches."

Suckling by the mother is general, and often of long duration. I 853
came across a little boy of about 4 years, who, after helping his elder sister to carry up water from the river, used to claim and obtain refreshment from his mother's "tote-totes" (breasts; children's speech, possibly from Carib "totaka," to support). In the all-too-frequent event of a woman dying in childbirth, the maternal aunt or even the grandmother will suckle the infant. I was told that any woman who once has borne, irrespective of age, may induce lactation by the use of certain herbs, some applied locally, others taken internally. I was unable to learn their names, with two exceptions: the ripe fruit [278]
of the corossol (*Anona muricata*) and a berry they call kurupûm (*Renealmia exaltata* (?)). Whatever the cause, I myself witnessed the case of a woman whose youngest child was a grown man, giving the breast with apparent success to her niece's newborn baby.

Clever as the Carib woman would seem to be in inducing the rise of her milk, so her attempts to get rid of it appear clumsy to us. When the time for weaning has come, her usual procedure is to milk herself onto a fire stone, or, better still, into the nest hole of a species of large black ant, known locally as fourmis mordantes.

The naming of infants has, nowadays, become confused with 553
Christian baptism, though the baptismal name itself is rarely, if ever, used in after life, its place being taken by another, chosen concurrently. Despite the priest's protests, baptism is delayed until at least one month after birth—that is, until the septa of the cranium have joined. The choice of names falls to the godparents—to the godfather in the case of a boy; to the godmother in the case of a girl. Carib names, such as Wàkanik, Màruka, Cimanàri, are known to have been used as recently as 20 years ago, but no living example remains. The nonbaptismal name now takes their place. Most families bear surnames, or, as they call them, "titles"—relics, in all

11: Taylor E-5 (ca. 1930-1937)1946
ST13 Callinago ST13

its tongue "to break the thread" (?) so that it may the sooner learn to speak. 844
Then she stretches the limbs, pinches the nose, and "gives the head a nice shape" 304
by pressing the forehead with her thumb-pads upward and backward from the
supraorbital ridges toward the crown. This proceeding is continued by massag-
ing the forehead, using a circular and upward motion of the palm of the hand.
No measures are taken today to maintain the head-shape thus given, and "only
old-timers bother to make a child look nice, nowadays." A bulbous or protrud- [804]
ing forehead is considered ugly.

The accouchée has to submit to a strict regime for forty days, but the new- 846
born child is suckled in what to us is a haphazard way, given arrowroot or *Cassa* 853
starch and herbal teas from the start, and handled by all members of the
household.

The baby-name given to the child at birth is today that by which it is regis- 553
tered; while the "true" name, chosen by the sponsor of like sex, is that now given 851
in baptism. This rite, at which the parents do not assist, usually takes place a 608
month or so after birth, and is followed by either a feast or dance or both. God-
parents are chosen rather for their social or economic status than for any spirit-
ual qualities. The relationship is, however, taken very seriously, and parents
and godparents address one another as "compère" and "commère." The ears of [304]
female infants are pierced and a thread passed through the hole in order to keep
it open until such time as rings are acquired.

Apart from the baby-name and patronymic (baptismal names are, at least 551
among older Caribs, not easily divulged) modern Caribs are supposed to have
surnames, which they call titres *titles*. But these are infrequently and irregularly
employed, and usually consist of the given name of a grandfather or greatgrand-
father. Brothers sometimes bear different "titles"! Illegitimate children take [841]
their father's name (as patronymic) and "title."

As soon as they learn to walk, Carib children follow their mothers or big 461
sisters to the river morning and evening, and so acquire early a taste for bathing
and the habit of carrying little calabashes of water or other loads more in play [515]
than in earnest. Soon their fathers or big brothers make for them tiny carry-alls
(shoulder-baskets), traps, fishing rods, etc., so that play and work merge into
one another. One of the few non-utilitarian amusements—for some grown-ups 526
as well as for children—is to "run the waves" (courir lames), a local variety of
surf-riding which Breton also recorded. When available, the "seat" of a canoe—
a plank seat about 9 inches wide by 2½ to 3 ft long—is used; but with a
favorable surf, very good "rides" may be had without it, merely by stiffening the
body and using the outstretched hands as a rudder.

13: Hodge & Taylor N. E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

respectively to the head of a coulibri (a local hummingbird) and to topitambours (*Calathea allouia*); to l'envers blanc which has white tubers about two feet long. The tubers of l'envers rouge are reddishmed and thick but not more than nine or ten inches long while those of l'envers caraïbe are up to three feet long but thin with the peculiarity of sometimes coiling upon themselves at the end. The leaves of all these varieties, although similar in form, vary considerably in size (3-10 inches long, 1.5-5 inches broad), and in the presence or absence of red coloring on the petioles, sheaths, and bases.

L'envers blanc and l'envers rouge are the only varieties cultivated for the alimentary value of their starch, and of these the former is more common. Arrowroot starch is preferred locally instead of milk (supposed to give worms!) as a food for young children, and even breast-fed infants are given arrowroot as a supplementary food from their second or third day of life.

The pounded tuber of any of the varieties, mixed with the black wax of the native stingless bee (*Melipona*), is applied to sores and infected wounds. This poultice was formerly used on wounds inflicted by poisoned arrows hence the plant's English name, arrowroot.

Although all varieties of l'envers are supposedly «good» for various accidents and circumstances of man's life (in the magical sense), the one known as l'envers caraïbe or l'envers tête chien [*] is considered especially efficacious as a powerful Carib charm, and is mentioned in several of the Indians' legends. This plant is said to have been «given» to the old time Caribs by the «Maître Tête Chien» (a mythical, anthropomorphic chief of all tête chien snakes), who taught the Caribs how to use it. The crushed tuber rubbed on the body when bathing or a little of the starch (obtained by washing the grated tuber and allowing it to settle) held in the mouth is said to confer on the user power over other people.

Magical rites are connected both with its planting and with the digging of the plant, but as a charm it must not be observed,

[*] The variety takes its name from the local tête chien or boa (*Constrictor constrictor*) because the tuber of the plant grows straight down into the ground for two or three feet and then often coils on itself in a manner reminiscent of the snake.

13: Hodge & Taylor N. E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

PORTULACACEAE. Purslane Family.

Portulaca oleracea Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 445. 1753.
Purslane. — Coupié, Pourpier.

A cosmopolitan weed of gardens and waste lands throughout the temperate and tropical regions of the world.

The boiled leaves of coupié are eaten by the Caribs (and the Creoles) as a green vegetable, but they are also employed as a plaster or poultice on the loins in order to ease backache or painful menstruation. For the latter purpose the leaves are often mixed with kudjuruk (*Petiveria alliacea*).

Specimen citation: 107 (T).

ANNONACEAE. Custard-apple Family.

Annona muricata Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 536. 1753.
Soursop. — Corossol. — **salépana** (cf. Taino **xanáboa**).

A familiar tree of the West Indies and grown throughout the tropics for its fruit which is used as a table fruit or more often to make delicious sorbetes or to flavor ice cream.

Cultivated specimens supply the Caribs with a source of a refreshing fruit juice which is used as an unfermented drink. A fermented drink formerly was prepared from chewed up fruits. The fruit is believed to induce lactation in women if, 1) eaten alone; 2) if used locally as a poultice; or 3) if used as one ingredient in a tea which also includes a momben leaf (*Spondias mombin*), two leaves of 'ti baume (*Hyptis atrorubens*), three leaves of trois quarts (*Passiflora* sp.) and a fruit of kurupum (*Myrcia citrifolia*). A painful retroverted uterus (called « mal de mère ») is treated with a tea made from three leaves of corossol, two leaves of bois canawe (*Cornutia pyramidata*), and one sprig of Panis (*Anethum graveolens*). A tea supposed to cure gonorrhea has included in its preparation a piece of the root of the corossol (see *Solanum torvum*); while a ritual tea used against diarrhea also employs leaves of corossol (see *Ocimum micranthum*). The fruit must not be eaten by those going fishing as it would prevent

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

Caribs eat the fruits of the monben and formerly used them to prepare a fermented drink. The fruits are also believed to induce lactation but it is uncertain how they are employed. Inflamed or swollen joints are claimed to be cured by exposing them to the fumes of the burning kernels of monben fruits. A tea used to treat sore throat is made from either the leaves or seeds. Monben leaves are one ingredient in a special purging tea given after parturition (see *Jatropha* spp.), as well as in another tea used to induce lactation in women (see *Annona muricata*).

SAPINDACEAE. Soapberry Family.

Cardiospermum halicacabum Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 366. 1753.
Batard Persil.

An herbaceous climbing vine growing in tropical regions throughout the world.

The leaves of batard persil are crushed in water by the Caribs to make what is said to be a refreshing and cooling drink.

Specimen citation: 3289.

Sapindus saponaria Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 367. 1753.
Sapindus inaequalis DeCandolle, Prodr. 1: 608. 1824.
Soapberry, Soap Tree. — Bois Savonette[37]. — *tsilisi* (m), *lilisru* (w).

A tree of lower elevations found in the West Indies and in continental tropical America.

The fruits of the soapberry may be used for washing purposes, and in various parts of the Antilles the seeds are strung to make necklaces.

Dominica's Caribs employ the bark («scales») of *Sapindus saponaria* for soap while a concentrated decoction of the bark is reputed to stop dysentery.

Specimen citation: no herbarium material collected.

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[37] Not to be confused with two other Dominica trees, *Loxocarpus* sp. and *Pithecellobium jupunba*, also called bois savonette.

13: Hodge & Taylor N. E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

Passiflora spp.

1824 Passion-Flower. — Pomme de Liane Zombie, Trois Quarts.

Several subherbaceous trailing species of this genus, including at least *P. andersonii* DC. and *P. rubra* L., are common on Dominica and are called trois quarts, apparently indiscriminately. The Island Carib women boil the stem and leaves of these plants and the resulting decoction is drunk to induce lactation. A more complicated tea for the same purpose but using certain additional plants is described under *Annona muricata*.

[853]

Specimen citation: 127 (T), 470, 3081, 3284 (*Passiflora rubra*); 3348, 3580 (*P. andersonii*).

CARICACEAE. Papaya Family.

Carica papaya Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 1036. 1753.

Papaya, Papaw. — abdisi.

A number of horticultural varieties of the papaya exist; these are widely cultivated and spontaneous in tropical America, but their original homeland in this hemisphere remains unknown.

1824 252 [278] The green (unripe) fruit is boiled and eaten by the Island Caribs as a vegetable; the ripe fruit is eaten raw. A green fruit, half-baked in hot embers, is split in two, and one half is then applied while hot as a poultice to any local inflammation. Raw meat or fowl is often wrapped in the leaves, for a digestive enzyme, papain, contained therein renders it more tender when cooked.

Specimen citation: no herbarium material collected.

BEGONIACEAE. Begonia Family.

1824 **Begonia dominicalis** A. DeCandolle ex Grisebach, Fl. Br. W. I. 304, 1860, *sensu lat.*

Dominica Begonia. — L'Oseille.

A tall begonia commonly found in the moist ravines and wet forests of Dominica and Guadeloupe.

[278] The leaves and flowers of l'oseille (see also *Episcia maltifolia*) are employed by the Caribs as well as by the Creoles to make a tea for colds.

Specimen citation: 472, 473, 3312.

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

Another tea
[824 853] brewed of a mixture of the barks of maho piment and pois doux (*Inga laurina*) and given to women to induce lactation. For further uses of this species as an ingredient in ritual baths see *Ipomoea pes-caprae* and *Ocimum micranthum*.

Specimen citation: 21 (T), 466, 3274.

COMBRETACEAE. White Mangrove Family.

Terminalia catappa Linnaeus, Mant. 1: 128. 1767.

L'Amande.

A large, spreading coastal tree, native to Malaya but now widely dispersed in the tropics of both hemispheres.

[313 153] Caribs make boards from the strong, brown timber while the ripe seeds are eaten by them like almonds.

Specimen citation: 3148, 3337.

MYRTACEAE. Myrtle Family.

Pimenta racemosa (Miller) J. W. Moore, Bernice P. Bishop Mus. Bull. 102: 33. 1933.

Pimenta acris Kosteletsky, All. Med. Pharm. Fl. 4: 1526. 1835.

Amomis caryophyllata Krug & Urban, Engler Bot. Jahrb. 19: 573. 1894.

Bay Tree, Bay Rum Tree. — Bois d'Inde, Black Cinnamon. — *asáru, hasuru* («peeled»?).

A well known species native to the West Indies and northeastern South America and cultivated elsewhere in tropical regions. In Dominica the bay tree frequents hillsides generally at lower elevations. This tree is one of the first «spices» recorded from the New World. Chanca, on Columbus' second voyage, wrote of the island of Marie Galante: «We found there a tree whose leaf had the finest smell of cloves that I have ever met with; it was in shape like a laurel leaf, but not so large» (69).

[411] The heavy, incorruptible wood was used formerly by the Caribs for making war clubs (*butu*). Today it is employed in the manufacture of «boucans» (barbecues), pestles for wooden mortars,

9 [i.e., of Maho. - Analysis]

13: Hodge & Taylor N. E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

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crude singlepost presses for sugarcane, house-piles, forked posts for **maïsa** (primitive type native dwelling), etc. Bay leaves and fruits are used in a tea drunk as a cure for colic and stomach ache, or in a shampoo for washing the hair or body. In more recent years the leaves have been sold to merchants of the island for distillation of the essential oil.

[278 388 439]

Specimen citation: 491, 492, 3220.

Myrcia citrifolia (Aublet) Urban, Fedde Repert. 16: 150. 1919.
Myrcia coriacea DeCandolle, Prodr. 3: 243. 1828.
Couroupoume. — Kurupum. — *iemdue, tika-tika.*

This usually shrubby tree is known from Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Lesser Antilles. On Dominica it is most frequent at lower elevations along the windward coast.

The wood is resistent to insects and so is used occasionally on the islands in house building.

The small edible fruits, prepared in a special tea (see *Annona muricata*) are used by the Carib women to induce lactation, while the leaves — along with those of fleurs la fête de Dieu (*Petrea kohautiana*), chou froidure (*Xanthosoma* sp.), and du thé pays (*Capraria biflora*) — are boiled up to make a tea used to combat diarrhea.

[853 278]

Specimen citation: 10 (T), 3253, 3324.

Psidium guajava Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 470. 1753.
Psidium guava Griesbach, Fl. Br. W. I. 241. 1860.
Guava. — Gouyave, Goyave. — *balíkari, kuídbu* (white variety); *balúbui* (m), *waliape* (w) (red variety).

The guava is widely planted for its fruit in tropical and subtropical regions where it often is a pioneer weedy tree on open abandoned clearings. It is a native of the West Indies and continental tropical America. In Dominica it occurs on open slopes at lower and middle elevations.

The fruit is edible, while an infusion of the bark, root, and leaves is given by the Caribs to those suffering from diarrhea or intestinal chill.

[262 278]

Specimen citation: 4 (T), 496, 3350.